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CORADDI

January 1976

the university of north carolina at greensboro

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The *Coraddi* is the fine arts magazine of the University of the North Carolina at Greensboro.

Submissions are now being accepted for the next issue of *Coraddi*. Students of UNC-G and members of the Greensboro community wishing to join the staff should drop by the *Coraddi* offices, Room 205 Elliott Hall UNC-G. Undergraduates not interested in working for the magazine but wishing to meet and talk with other writers may contact the newly formed Undergraduate Writers Meeting through the *Coraddi* office.



The cover photograph was taken in Maine, during the summer of 1975, by Keith Kolischak.

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We would like to give special thanks to: Kevin Kilmartin, Ken Darr and the members of the Appropriations Committee, and Bruce Clapper (of the Greensboro Printing Company) for making this issue possible.

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Photography

Keith Kolischak: Cover, 5, 6, 13, 34,
38, 39(upper right), 39(upper left),
40, inside back cover.
James Mazotta: 14, 39(lower), 44.
Dr. Leon Mazotta: 17.

*My omniverous couch
eats pens and matchbooks and even golf balls
It is the house of fleas
It spews stuffing through bursting seams
like some ancient and well-worn bordells
cast-off
Passed through many hands,
Having seen many lovers,
This old sofa stretches and belches here
in my living room
Harboring among her other ailments
an occasional fragment of wisdom.*

—Louise Brown



Turtle
Aquatint
Sue Sciotto





Rendevous

Ted, Paul, and Jim meet each Wednesday
To talk their silent whispers of wished-for lives
Passing the bottle and the time
Dreaming of escape and freedom
And the monotony of their lives.
Ted talks of his route
And the sea of milk he delivers
Following a permanent path
Lined with day old news and empty bottles
Paul, the silenced librarian,
Sighs behind piles of books to be stamped
And is stamped, reading only of life from novels
Others have not checked our
Wishing, while Jim speaks of drains
Clogged with hair, food and life
Which he frees, unable to escape himself.
Each talks of leaving to see the world,
Painting adventures with watercolors
Till courage grows and each vows
To leave next day.
Biding final farewell to each friend
To meet again in Peru some day
They drive away in different directions
To meet again next Wednesday
To talk their silent whispers of wished-for lives.

—Marilynn Byerly

Anything I Can Do For You

— M. J. Dayton

Billy tapped his leather shoe and clicked his pen in a quick excited rhythm. The pen, which was still in the pocket of his white tennis shirt, was leaking. A blue blot crept toward Billy's blue jeans. Billy hadn't noticed it yet.

CLICK . . . CLICK CLICK . . . CLICK . . . Billy stared at the professor, a squat grey-haired man who spoke colorlessly on an already drab topic—inflation or money management or banking or something—Billy wasn't quite sure. He heard only a drone like that of a plane passing overhead. His mind wandered elsewhere.

"She better come. She'll come, she never misses class. Still, she's pretty late. What if she doesn't show up? Oh, God, she's got to. CLICK . . . CLICK CLICK . . . CLICK . . . I'll kick her ass if she doesn't come. Maybe I should just ask somebody else to the concert. She probably won't go anyways. 'All that loud music hurts my ears,' she'll say. You bitch, you better show up. Bitch, bitch. Sorry bitch. Billy searched deep in his pants pocket and dug out a comb. He spit heavily in it before running it through his wavy brown hair. He hoped that would make his hair lay flat. Instead, the waves swelled higher, crashing unevenly over his ears and shirt collar. Billy replaced the comb and checked his zipper to make sure it was still up. Still up, he thought confidently, but his ears burned slightly. Once, in high school, he had gone on a date with a girl he liked immensely. After an unusually silent evening, he had discovered that his fly was open. She had never gone out with him again.

CLICK . . . CLICK . . . CLICK . . . CLICK . . . CLICK . . . "Where is she?" CLICK . . . CLICK . . . CLICK . . . CLICK . . . Ah, kiss it professor. I don't want to listen to your garbage. Kiss it. Kiss it, kiss it. Why isn't she here, the bitch. If she doesn't come today, I'll never ask her out. She must think she's mighty damn smart cutting class all the damn time. Why the hell do I want to go out with her anyway?

Suddenly Billy's pen ceased clicking and his body tensed. His knees jammed against the desk top, knocking a pencil and notebook to the floor. Barely audible above the buzz of the teacher, came a familiar sound.

CLICKETY CLACK . . . JINGLE . . . CLICKETY CLICKETY . . . CLICKETY . . . JINGLE . . . JINGLE . . . CLICKETY CLACK . . . She was coming. Billy knew now for sure. The telltale beat of her high-heeled shoes echoed through the hall, louder and louder, accompanied by the ringing of her silver necklace.

CLICK.

The door swung open like a gate. In she strided, her head held high, her blond hair flowing behind her like a coronation robe. The dress she wore swished to and fro with the sway of her slender hips, and her breasts bounced lightly with each step. As she took her seat, located one row over and one seat behind Billy's, she flashed a smile to the professor and whispered an apology.

Billy's jaw quivered partly from nervousness, but mostly from elation. The hair on his neck stood conspicuously erect. With his hand he rubbed in a thin coat of spit, but it refused all coaxing.

Billy stared incessantly at her body, caressing every feature from firm thighs partially obscured by a curtain of cloth, to glowing cheeks and warm blue eyes.

Even more his eyes undressed her, attempting to visualize the body that lay silently, like a slumbering beast, behind her dress. Everyday he graphed out her proportions, erasing and replottting as he saw fit.

"Mamma Mia, I knew she'd come. God, she's so cute. What an ass. If I could get my hands . . . I wonder if any fire burns behind those blue eyes. How far should I try? She looks so damned naive. Just like a kid, but who knows? Can't be too pushy at first. Better take things cool, easy. I'd hate to scare her off."

Billy flexed his muscles, coolly, the way he had practiced. He rubbed his shoes against his pants leg, inspecting the shine judiciously, and applying small quantities of spit where needed. Billy picked this habit up from an old war movie he saw in which the Americans with "spit-polished" boots had stomped their German foes. Billy once more wiped his shoes, then noisily stomped them to the floor, smashing the pencil he had dropped earlier. He leaned over to pick up the pieces and managed to steal a quick, but disappointing glance up her dress, which was adequately long.

"Let's see, we go to the show first, play it cool. Maybe a little dope would be nice. Wonder if she smokes. Yeah, everybody that goes to concerts does, she's bound to. Then what? Beer or wine? She'll probably want wine. Maybe we can go somewhere and sit and drink. And when she's feeling good and loose, maybe I can chase my roommate off. Yeah, that'll be perfect. Then?"

"God I hope she doesn't wear a bra. How do those darn things work anyhow?" He stared intensely at her bra strap, trying to uncover the solution. "Looks like two snaps shouldn't be any trouble, just like a pair of blue jeans." He examined the snaps on his jeans, instinctively checking his zipper while in the area, "Good, good, still up."

Engrossed in such thoughts, Billy hardly noticed when

class ended. In fact, he was still sitting at his desk when Barbara walked out the door.

He bolted from his seat and ran down the hall. Not seeing her, he raced outside, finally catching her, as she stepped into a yellow '74 Plymouth Duster with wide white-letter tires.

"Wait a minute!" she screamed, "Wait a minute. I need to talk with you."

She started the engine and raced it twice. "What can I help you with?"

"You got a minute, there's something I'd like to ask you." Billy's wind had not yet returned and the words came out between gasps.

She raced the engine again, longer this time. "Sure, I've got a minute, if you've got a cigarette."

Though Billy didn't smoke, he slapped his shirt pocket. His hand returned wet and purple. Billy quickly grasped the situation and crossed his arms over his pocket. Barbara smiled, simply. "No cigarette, huh?"

"I'm sorry, I don't have one, I uh wanted to ask you if—"

VAROOM . . . VAROOM . . . She floored it twice more, impatiently. "I really do need to go buy some cigarettes."

"But there's something I want to ask you."

"Tell you what, why don't you drop by this evening and tell me?"

Billy's face brightened. "Sure, where do you live?"

"You mean, where do I work—1419 Midon St." She backed up, yelled, "See you this evening," and roared off, trailed by a cloud of blue smoke.

Dumbfounded, Billy gaped at the empty parking space. It had all happened like a flash of lightning. He was still uncertain as to what had been said, what it had all meant. He tried to piece the conversation back together.

"She asked for a cigarette. A cigarette, and I couldn't even give her one. Shit, all lost for the price of one lousy cigarette. You clod, you didn't even get your foot in the door. You must really think you're something, asking a girl like that out. Jerk." He slapped himself on the face, smearing ink on his nose and forehead.

"But didn't Barbara ask me over to her place. No that's not right, she told me to come see her at work. At work! Fantastic, maybe we can go out after she gets off, drink a couple of beers or something. She was in a hurry. She'll probably be calmer tonight, she looks

like the night type. I hope I didn't come on too strong. I'll have to play it cool this evening, she seems like the timid type. Mamma Mia, one hell of an evening coming up. God, I can hardly stand it. What was that address she said? 1914 Midon? 1419 Midon? You fool, how're you going to find her if you can't remember the right address? Ah crap, I'll find her no sweat." He yawned and flexed his muscles, coolly. "Wine or beer, I wonder—"

The evening was clear, the air stinging to the lungs and hands. Streetlamps cast arenas of light on the sidewalks which Billy walked.

The lights illuminated every third house so that Billy had to guess at most of the house addresses. His footsteps echoed from every house, and he constantly peered over his shoulder.

Billy's feet were swelling from the walking he had done. His normal daily exercise consisted of brushing his teeth and eating a hardy breakfast. Today, however, he had walked the full length of Midon St., nearly 3 miles searching despairingly for an address he had forgotten. He had tried 1914 Midon St. only to be greeted by a married couple, both young, both sympathetic, and both in love. He searched on for his own love, peering into every window, hoping to find the right one.

Billy was well armed today. He had discarded the shirt he was wearing and now wore a long sleeve one with two pockets. Each pocket contained a pack of cigarettes; in the left pocket was a pack of "Salems" unopened; a "Marlboro" box rested in the other one, opened with one cigarette missing. Billy still felt a little dizzy though he had smoked it five blocks back. His right hand gripped a bottle of Chianti. A corkscrew punched holes in his right pocket, occasionally pricking his thigh.

"1517, 1515, 1419 has got to be it. 1513 . . . 1511. I'm ready now. Bring it on honey, everything you can throw at me I can handle. Baby, I'm ready to do some shaking, 1509, 1507. God I hope I find it. It sure is getting ratty looking. I'm bound to have the wrong address, unless she works in one of these cheap bars down here. Hey, that'd be all right. Get a little loose a little warm, and we'll both be ready for some action. 1425, 1423, 1421 one more down. Wait a minute!"

Billy stood disbelievingly before a huge neon sign that announced religiously:

EXOTICA EROTICA SALON
Health & Relaxation Studio
Complete Massages
All girl staff

"This couldn't be right, what the hell was that address? Now I'll never find it." He waited several minutes on the street, as if expecting to see Barbara come walking up. Only laughter from a nearby bar greeted him. It was a low mocking laugh that encouraged him, indeed begged him to enter the building before him. Clutching his wine bottle, he twisted the doorknob and went inside.

At first his eyes were struck by the softness of the lighting. After the harsh glare of streetlamps, the room seemed fuzzy, warm. Thick shag carpet mellowed all noises to a pleasant hum. Two walls lay hidden behind plastic vines and plants, while two easy chairs lined the far wall. The room reminded him of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

An aging lady with a strong chin and sagging breasts appeared from behind a curtain at the back wall. She flashed a smile and asked sweetly, "Anything I can do for you, sir?"

An aging lady with a strong chin and sagging breasts appeared from behind a curtain at I'd check."

"I understand. Barbara is with another client right now. She'll be through in a few minutes if you don't mind waiting. Why don't you just have a seat and make yourself comfortable?"

"N-No thanks—"

Billy bolted out the front door, leaped onto the sidewalk and sprinted half a mile, with that same low pitched laughter stinging his ears.

He stopped at a gravel driveway. Stooping down, he gathered a handful and began heaving them one-by-one, into the night. After several throws, his arm became sore but he kept on.

"Why that pervert. God, they're everywhere; you can't even spot 'em anymore. Aren't there any healthy normal girls left? Don't any of these bitches know what true love is? All they think about is sex, perverted sex at that. Bitch, pervert. If she'd been raised by my parents, she'd have some decent morals, by God."

Billy dropped the rocks and reached in his pocket to readjust the corkscrew. It wasn't until then that he noticed his zipper was open.



he longs to shut his eyes
when he does they reopen
in the darkness of his head
to see without light

he tries to close his mouth
when he does it reopens
in the darkness of his hand
to gasp without breath

he wants to stop thinking
but the waves of thought
press him to the wall
and beat crazily in his face

we reach our hands to him
to feel our palms turn to pads
and our nails to claws
our pulse to hunger

we call to him with soft voices
our voices break in the well of his ears like shells
we lose them as they echo shrilly down the dark
he cries when they strike the bottom

—Craig Miller

The Mapmaker's Song

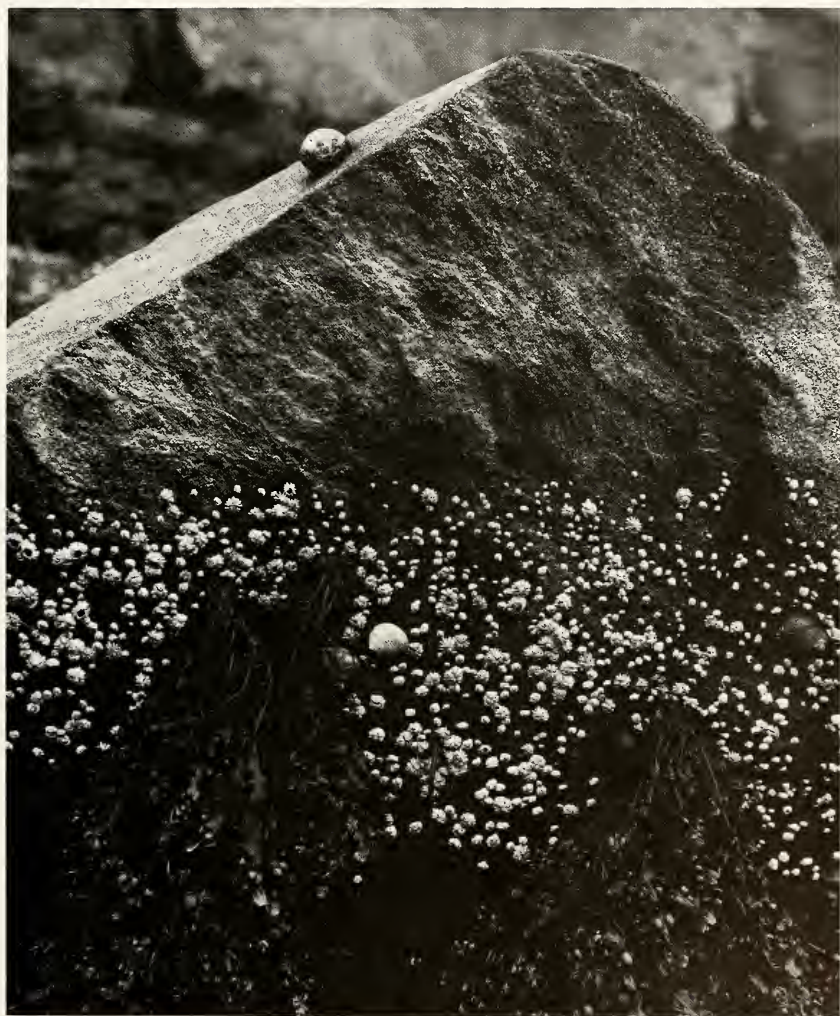
My wife was an ocean, waves churned her
lifetide in its cycles learned her
nightide to the moonlight turned her
noontide in the sunlight kept her
deathtide in its deepness swept her

My sons were storm clouds, wild winds pushed them
birthwinds out of the ocean crushed them
foolswinds through the mountains rushed them
deathwinds into the desert bled them
earthwinds to other oceans led them

Give me fire though it will sear me
give me sons though they will fear me
I will love though love will hurt me
I will live till love deserts me

I was a desert, time's hand kept me
lifesand to the fire left me
noonsand through the fire swept me
timesand into fields made me
loves hand to the waters gave me

—Craig Miller





Streetlight Blue

—John B. Riley

Jackie was glad to see the rain that would wash away the smog blanket over the city. When he left the library lightning was quivering on the horizon. Before the first block was past thunder cracked and boomed near; raindrops battered his face. He barely sidestepped the cloudburst by darting into a shoe store alcove.

Rain soon fell in crazily spinning torrents bouncing knee high off the cracked sidewalks. Streetlights turned blue the rapids flowing down the drains. The stores and office buildings were dark and the only traffic was an occasional police car creeping through the storm.

Jackie glanced up and down the street. The empty store across the street, with a close-out sign hanging askew and a handpainted "for lease" sign in the windows was blurred and new through the white rain curtain shielding his refuge. Down, toward the middle of the city, the street curved right over a bridge built high over a railroad. Slightly visible, on the far side on top of the ivy-covered bluff, was a station—a passenger station, strong and sturdy with a solid rock foundation, that had been deserted many years.

On clear summer nights when Jackie was younger he would go alone to the veranda and sit on the benches built under it. The benches were hard and bolted to the floor for the passengers, that were now gone forever, to rest on while awaiting trains. There he would ignore the



traffic and with fireflies playing in the canyon he would imagine himself a soldier off to war. Chills would start up his spine and fill his body when he thought of Lincoln with his sad eyes and beautifully ugly, wrinkled face. He would be there for hours, sometimes with legs hanging over the guard rails, staring at the summer star-speckled sky. The east would burst into battle flames and gray light would wash away the scene before he left.

It made him smile with embarrassment when he thought of himself then. Everything was possible. He was a child wrapped in books and the dreams that grew from books. He would read something that his youthful instincts knew was good and he would build a fantasy that would change his life. After a fantasy lived and died his life was different than before. When he read about Huckleberry Finn, he built a raft—only to find out that the only river was black and still behind a mill.

Now thunder clapped so loud it vibrated Jackie's ears echoing in the alcove. Rain threatened to shatter the asphalt and concrete. When lightning shot close Jackie would foolishly jump deeper into the alcove. The raindrops were big. That was a sign the rain would end soon. Home was not far away and although he was not sleepy he needed sleep. If not for the books getting wet he would walk on. He needed rest now he was on piecework.

He had worked loading trucks. One afternoon, earlier in the summer, after he had finished his work and was waiting for the evening whistle his foreman, a man named Walter, and the plant manager called Jackie over.

"Jackie this is Mr. Vestal, our plant manager."

Jackie raised his hand to shake, thought better, and pulled his dirty hand away as Mr. Vestal reached for it. "Sorry, sir, but my hand is dirty. I'm glad to meet you though."

Mr. Vestal's frown melted the grin off Walter's face. "The pleasure is mutual young man. I only have a moment but I've got good news. I suppose you know Mr. McNeill recently died from a heart attack. This leaves an opening on the tie-up table. That job is paid on piecework and gives a hardworking person opportunity to increase their salary. Walter believes you will make a good tie-up man and after studying your records I think so also. So Monday morning report to the tie-up table and

as soon as you're accustomed we'll pay you on a piecework. O.K.?"

Jackie was in a panic. His job was heavy at times but he usually worked alone. He knew the people at the tie-up table worked fast and constant like machines. He tried to protest, to beg, but all he could muster was babbling.

"That's fine son. I knew you would appreciate the opportunity. Just show your appreciation by hard work." Then he stiffly turned, mimicked by Walter, and walked away.

That was how Jackie got on piecework. Now he stood at a table and tied strings around bundles of socks all day.

The rain slowed as fast as it began and became a steady drizzle. Jackie unbuttoned his shirt and laid it over the stack of rented books. He scooped up the books, wrapped the shirt around them, and started down the sidewalk with the drizzle and mist cold on his white back. His hair was wet and drops of water ran down his chest when he passed the immobile passenger station.

He turned left at the next block. He was in the middle of the city. Across the corner, wedged between two skyscrapers, was a cafe. People constantly went in and out of the cafe. When the door opened Jackie could hear music from the jukebox mixed with the hum of too many people talking as he walked fast through the drizzle and mist.

Jackie lived in a boarding house five blocks down this street. The boarding house was originally built by a wealthy family in what was then town square. The house was three stories and had two gables in front and back. It was once white but hadn't been painted since the descendants of the builders sold the house when town square was torn down to make room for a new industrial park. Jackie's mill was in the industrial park and the rooms were cheap.

He stopped on the porch of the boarding house and unwrapped the books. His shirt was soaked but the books were only damp. There were drops of water running down his back and chest into his pants. He quietly opened the door. It was not late but the front parlor was empty and dark. An oil stove was in the middle of the floor and a television was beside the entrance into the kitchen. The chairs and sofa were arranged with the television in sight. He crept up the stairs and entered his room at the end

of the third floor hall. He closed the door and switched on the overhead

light. He laid the books on a table. The table was loaded with paper, books, and an ancient typewriter. The table, bookshelf, small cabinet, and bed were the only furniture. There was a lamp on the table and a radio unplugged on the floor.

The only bathroom was down the hall. He went out and returned with a towel. He dried his back and head, unsnapped his jeans and dropped them to the floor. He turned on the lamp beside the bed, switched off the overhead light, selected a book from the stack, and stretched out on the bed.

He was absorbed in the book when there was a knock at the door. Surprised, he was almost at the door before he remembered his pants. "Wait a minute. I'll be right with you."

He hurried to the cabinet, pulled on a pair of work pants, and finished zipping them as he opened the door.

The guest was a tall young man with a wide, strong face. His hair was blond but now it was wet. His football jersey hung limp on his broad shoulders.

"What may I do for you?"

"I was looking for . . ." he pulled a wet slip of paper from his pocket, "Steve Cordell. He's got a motorcycle for sale in the newspaper."

"I'm afraid you have the wrong place. But if you would like to dry off you may come in."

"Hey no. I was just looking for this motorcycle."

"Sure. I just thought that . . ."

"I know what you thought." He suddenly seemed very angry. "I didn't see any damn motorcycle in this shabby neighborhood. I should have known."

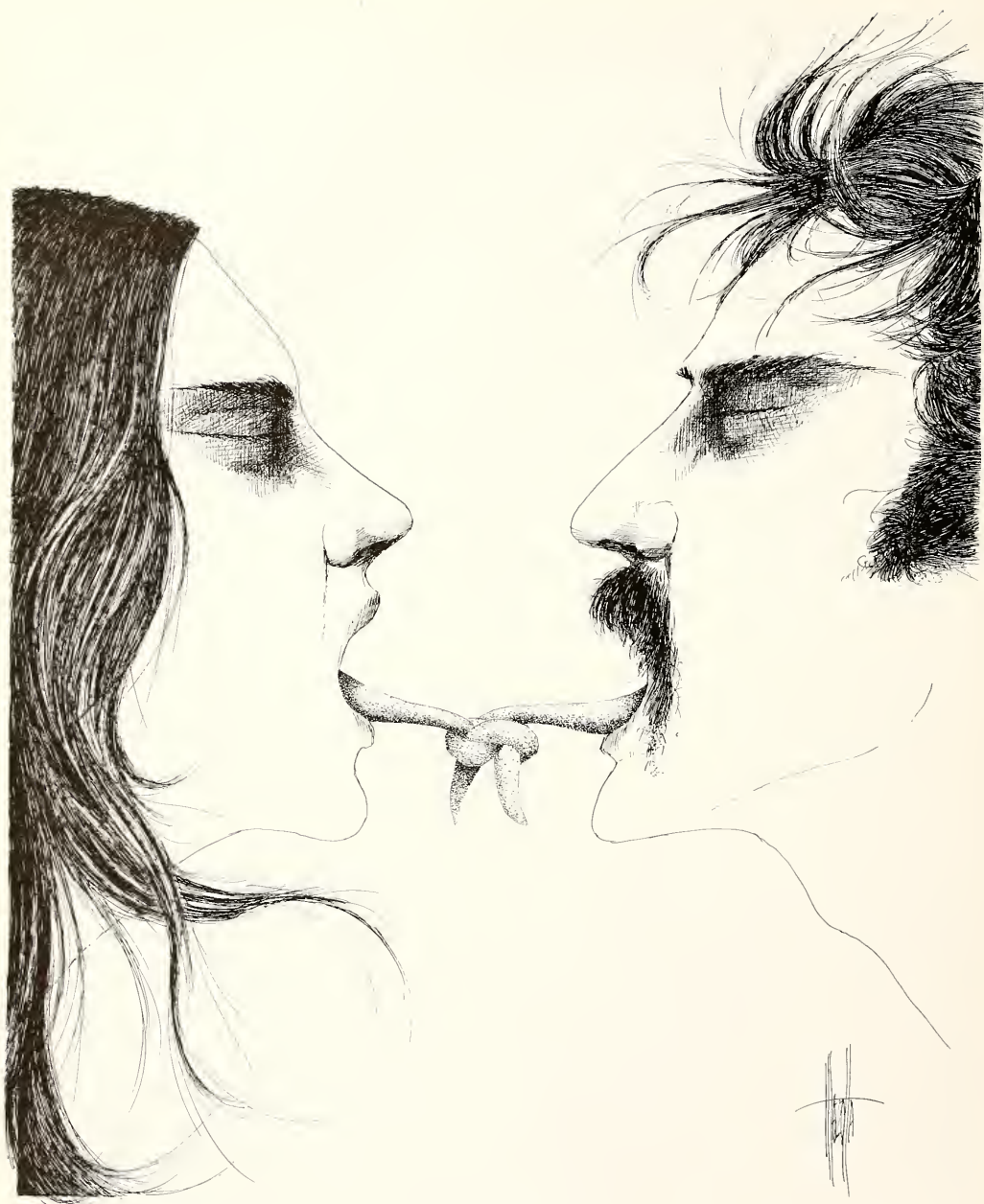
"Listen. I don't know anything about a motorcycle. I just saw you were wet."

"Go to hell, fairy." The stranger stalked away loud on the hardwood floor.

Jackie watched him walk away. It would be very funny if he didn't understand. He should try to laugh but it wasn't funny. He understood.

The room was stuffy and he raised the solitary window that faced the city. A faint wail of a siren drifted over the city lights. It was time for the night train to speed through the passenger station. No more rain fell and the streets were strips of black silk.





()

inside the dark abyss of warmth
where organs go frequently untouched,
except for the constant rush-flow of
life's body fluid,
time has it for
the beating of two hearts tremendously

The southern femalia portion
becoming moist and convenient
for a game of chase and catch
the sudden burst
as a spring shower deciding at last to pour
swooshes within the cavity
the innocent, lonely yolk
waiting to be stabbed
the mischievous, frivolous tadpoles
outwitting each self,
racing around and around the center of attention
the most clever side-tracks and becomes
the puncturer
the cycle has begun.

—Anna Renee Greene

*Is it the droplets of rain that begin to pitter patter
d
o
w
n the pane of my window
or is it tears filled with salt that taste like sweat?
They become rapid in succession
The raindrops on the miniature body of water are reminiscent
of a fish's breathing vibrations that appear at the surface
of the pond.
They refuse to let the sidewalk be
they continue spattering its outer
surface, beating it until it begins crying itself
slowly they fade away as if they are tired
they remind me of you
the whole process reminds me of you
Your charisma drops on me like a billion drops
of rain
continuing and building up driving me to a time of pure bliss
They begin fading however and finally stop
The process is over.
It may happen again sometime
But that time, that when may never come
Why should I have to wait?
I guess you might say a process of patience is essential
If that doesn't work,
try processing a little hope.*

—Anna Renee Greene



Jeff Kinard
W2
Oil on Canvas



Jeff Kinard
Untitled
Lithograph



Sue Sciotto
Untitled
Lithograph





Emmy Mills
Hillsborough Sunset
Oil on Canvas



Sue Sciotto
Still Life
Lithograph



Jack Stratton
Study of Robert as Eggman
Lithograph



Mary Beth Boone
Study—Seated Figure
Drawing



Jack Stratton
Untitled
Oil on Masonite



Mary Beth Boone
Study—Reclining Nude
Drawing

The Grocery Clerk

Life continues and I remain 9 to 5
Pricing groceries and filling the town
With gelatin at 3/25¢ all flavors
Being marked with the same black pen
9 to 5 for minimum wages plus.
Each day priced with precision
I dream beyond the mechanical motions
Of hands and eyes and tired feet
To the time when I was the woman
Errol Flynn fought for
Sword against sword with black-hearted villian,
Facing death for the country, the king and me.
Night after night he has returned
Tall and handsome to some
Palace, or sea, or prairie
In some guise after the 11 o'clock news
To fight for me;
And I know no matter what is put before us
We shall succeed with nobility and pride.
Sword against sword he fights
So it can end happily ever after
With me in his arms;
And I stamp groceries 9 to 5, 9 to 5
And smile softly.

—Marilynn Byerly

Computer Poetry

The "Jupeak" computer poetry program was conceived as an offshoot of last year's Academic Computer Center sponsored graphic art competition. If a computer can be used as an art medium, why not as a medium for the creation of poetry?

A simple form of the program was written in PL/C computer language during May of this year. However, the program has been modified since then and has slowly evolved into its current form. Originally, the sentence structures were much fewer and the grammatical quality was very poor.

The computer is programmed to randomly select words from a four-hundred item vocabulary of nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc., and place these selected words into a sentence structure in some (semi-) meaningful form. This necessitated programming the computer to make grammatical corrections. For example, placing the appropriate article before nouns, the correct use of plurals, and in some cases, adjectives. Other grammatical rules also had to be programmed in.

It should be noted that the poetry means nothing to the computer. However, to the reader, the sentences take on all kinds of meanings. What you see in the poetry, in all likelihood, reflects yourself or your environment.

Richard Griffiths is a native of Britain now living in Raleigh, NC. He is a sophomore sociology major, interested in the media and computer science.

The Petty Meadowlark Saluted

BUT, SOME LETTER SMOOTHLY CRUSHED SOME SUNSHINE
THEN, THE SCIENTIST CAUTIOUSLY SPAT
HOW WAS THE POEM ENVIOUS AND ELDER?
SUBSEQUENTLY, THE BANANA PEACEFULLY SUSPENDED
THE QUEENLY CHANCELLOR YEARNED THE DEAN

The Petty Spot Coagulated

THE CHOCOLATE BROWNIE CLOBBBERED SOME BOY CAUTIOUSLY
SOME THUNDER PETTED ITS OWL AGGRESSIVELY
ITS OBVIOUS FAIRY RAPED ITS ELDER BOY SCOUT
WHEN WAS SOME BULB X-RAYED AND TERRIBLE?
THE DIVINITY FUDGE WAS PERTURBING ITS SWAMP SLEAZILY

ITS YELLOW KANGAROO QUIBBLED THE INTIMATE COAT
WHEN WAS ITS WOMAN ENVIOUS AND FINE?
SOME MIRAGE FACTORED THE NIGHTINGALE KNOWLEDGEABLY
WHEN WAS ITS DEAN SLINKY AND HOPELESS?
ITS ROTUND ZOO EXPOSED ITS FRUSTRATED SLEEP

SOME BACON DINED WITH SOME GREASE ACCIDENTLY
WHAT WAS THE CHAIR ARTFUL AND ARTFUL?
THEREFORE, THE POEM SLEEPILY LOVED SOME SOUND
WHILE, ITS MARINE INEBRIATEDLY SALUTED
SINCE, ITS POP CORN SHYLY OUTLASTED

The Villanous Cafeteria Drank

ITS YOKED SUNSHINE DECLINED ITS ELDERLY KANGAROO
SOME DIVINITY FUDGE CRAWLED SOME CAPE ABUNDANTLY
HOWEVER, THE LAMP CONFIDENTLY BOILED SOME WHISKEY
WHEN WAS THE GIRL COWED AND FRUSTRATED?
THE OPERATION CLONED SOME EGGS DUMBFOUNDEDLY

ITS CAPE INEBRIATED SOME STICK SLEEPILY
THE EXAM JAPED ITS DIARRHEA CONFIDENTLY
THEN, ITS SAND OBVIOUSLY NULLIFIED
THE DRUGS WAS IN ITS OCEAN VICIOUSLY
SO, SOME BOY SCOUT EXPERTLY WAS UNDER ITS JEANS

HOW WAS SOME MAN VILLAINOUS AND COWED?
ITS YOKED FLIES WAS OUT OF THE OBVIOUS DEVIATION
BECAUSE, ITS TIME INCREDIBLY EXTRICATED ITS ASH TRAY
THEREFORE, ITS KING PERIODICALLY RESISTED
SO, SOME CHANCELLOR SLOWLY DINED WITH ITS ICE CREAM

ITS ANTS NULLIFIED ITS WOMAN VEHEMENTLY
SOME X-RAYED NOSE WAS BESIDE ITS LARGE CHANCELLOR
ITS MATHMATICS DINED WITH THE PUMP SMOOTHLY
SOME QUEENLY TUBE MOLLIFIED THE CAFETERIA
— FURTHERMORE, SOME NOISY TUBE COMBINED

The Hopeless Mathematics Contaminated

THE DINGY HOTEL ROOM ERUPTED THE COWED JUPEAK
HOW WAS SOME BEARS COWED AND STRIPED?
BUT, ITS SYRUP CAUTIOUSLY EXPOSED ITS BOY SCOUT
SOME TOWEL SPLUDGED ITS BOURBON RAPIDLY
THEREFORE, THE CHANCELLOR PLACIDLY SHIPPED ITS CAMPUS

ITS MARINE YEARNED ITS BELLS LAZILY
WHAT WAS ITS LIGHTNING STRIPED AND LIBERATED?
SOME X-RATED DIVINITY FUDGE REPAIRED SOME GULLIBLE SAND
SOME PUMP CONSUMED SOME COAT HOPELESSLY
SINCE, THE BANANA PASSIVELY PROVOKED



The Duchess, to the Duke

*"It has been years, my love.
Years since we felt the salt-sweet sea breeze
Smooth our faces,
Since the rolling swell
Sobbed in our hearts,
Long bitter years since we were young.*

*The ships were waiting beyond the strand
My velvet gown trailed in the sand
My fingers twined in yours,
The sharp steel gauntlet unnoticed in our grief at parting
While behind, my palfrey
And your mighty destrier
Tasted the waves with quivering velvet lips
And tugged at the leading reins.*

*I let you go
To your castles in Spain
The Castle and the Lion claimed your heart
The ring of steel made music in your ears
Where once I sang;
You sought another throne
Besides my heart.
Our love shivered in the gathering cold of age.*

*And now,
We tread the stately measures of the dance.
My hand within your velvet gage
Trembles and is stilled within your clasp
As strong and warm as that of yesteryear
Along the strand.
You smile,
The deep-hewn lines around your eyes—
Those well-beloved eyes—
Lighten and are gone,
As, soft, you kiss my hand.*

*Ah! Traitor heart that gentles at your touch,
As when this ebon hair was yet unstreaked with white
Before those lines were cleft upon your brow.
We have not changed
And in our hearts I've seen
A quiver of hope remains
Within our dying dreams
My love."*

—Diana Wilder

The Duke, to the Duchess

*"The wind wailed at our parting
And wrapped your midnight hair around our kiss
Your lips were petal-soft
And yielded to the bitter pain of my grief
And the salt I tasted there was not of the sea.*

*The russet velvet of your gown
Was but a shadow of the sand
Against the stormy azure of the sea
At our parting, years ago,
Along the strand.*

*Spain was a land of the sun
Golden, savage, primitive,
The lion's domain that welcomed me
And offered me its throne,
Fulfilled my golden dreams,
Then snatched them back with violent bloody hands.*

*The gold of Spain was crass and harsh
A land of hatred—bleak and pitiless—
Haunted by your face
And by our parting kiss.*


*So I returned
A man of broken heart and weary soul
One final dream left
And I sought that dream.*

*In the King's great palace of Sheen
We led the Christmas dance,
The first I'd held you
Since our parting at the strand.
And though your hair was winged with grey
Your eyes held passionate serenity
As once before they had, though wet with tears.*

*We led the dance
Beneath the mistletoe
I kissed your hand
You raised your lips to mine
And laid your head against my breast.
We stood thus
While the dance swirled round us,
On that Christmas eve.*

*Forgotten joy
Remembered only as a dream,
My Lady, my beloved wife,
My dearest love."*





The Captains and the Kings Depart

Do you hear the solemn steady beat
That down these long dim hallways ring
A steady tramp, a throb of marching feet?
Let them pass, the captains and the kings.

Pale and silent like a marble tomb
Between the walls that ghostly dirges sing
A fading glimmer in the deepened gloom
They slowly march, the captains and the kings.

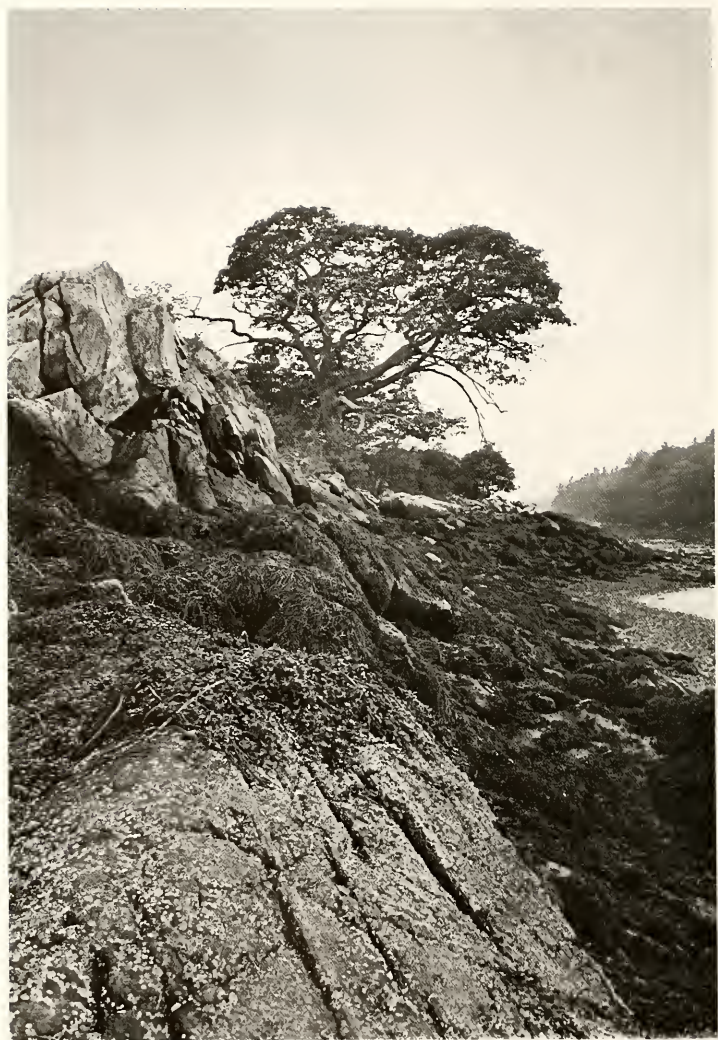
An echo of the sheers of countless throngs
A low exultant steady rustling
A gleam of shadows, of remembered songs
They march in chains – The captains and the kings.

Oblivion's the lot of common men
And in our torment death has lost its sting
But death's a bitter potion, in the end
When one has been a captain or a king.

—Diana Wilder







Made In Austria

A graveyard
mountain acres of wasted dreams
hushed passing of a farmer's cart
wooden wheels creaking on cobblestone
backdrop: inaudible corpse echoes
- If we could live again

We are in Austria
Vienna I think
Land of mountains; land of the river

The sun crawls up blue walls
My flowered skirt and bodice
melt to my skin. You suffer
more than I

Spirited by buried moans
we chase naked over graves
jump from tombstone to tombstone
We're children playing games:
hopscotch, drop-the-handkerchief
cops and robbers
The rotting dead rot on

Time is ours
not for experiment
or children's play and games
We are not children now

Roots protrude from the river's
stone-meshed flanks
moistened by finger streams

I am a lump of clay
yawning on your potter's wheel
spinning
waiting
What will you make of me -
a stone to cast to river's bottom
to fill an empty packet
to roll into a city gutter
perhaps a figurine
to decorate a Spanish garden?

Trout splash in mountain swift waters
swim up
down. Break the surface
rape the air

I don't want to be a stone
a figurine
I want to be air
unseen - around you
in you and you in me

Their heated bodies plunge
sizzle the sunless cold
explode
dazzling as fireworks on a July 4th
translucent as champagne
fizzing in a glass slipper
spread concentric ripples
again
again

Your work is magnificent
(in fact, my darling
you are magnificent)
and I am made.

The rotting dead rot on

—Barbara Ratliff



Wanna Drift Along Slow, Man

I'm feeling nervous as hell
punchy
If you invade me mister
I might
jump
quick
Give your prick a stick
Don't laugh, jibe,
it's not george dammit it's something bigger
a monster mean, I want to clean
out the world and
Make me neat inside.
Just want to be doin' right
Want a friend to hold my head
To just sit in my room and
Not talk, unless to
Play me music
or
Read me a poem
For a long time, till I feel easy again.
Til everything fits in place
With no trying
No striving to prove but just
Being
floating along smooth by days.

—Nancy Brown

July 21, 1975 Greensboro

The world is a terrifying place
to such a young pup as myself

You opened me like some ripe fruit
juicy and waiting
And woke me the next morning
with sweet nicotine kisses.
I opened my softest belly to you
and was overcome with pathos.

The cockroaches climb the walls
And the streetlight melts in the water
on the roof outside the window.
Here in the fading heart of the city
closer than I would ever dare to live
I am unblessed by sleep.
Perhaps I must be more patient,
but with the world at my fingertips
I want to swallow it whole.

—Louise Brown



Old Guys

Do It All The Time

—Cindy Pierce

When Maury Greenspan jumped from a fifth floor window of the Wesser Hotel, the rest of the world did not stop to reflect on it. Jack Cunningham still made fast deals in his used car business on Highway 61 by the Super Mart. The Wesser Weekly Herald still reported the school board actions and the Little League scores. And WETL-TV Channel 12 still played the National Anthem with marines taking down the flag at 1:30 each morning. Only for Frances Shaw did everyday things lose their momentum and cause her to think.

Frances Shaw was at twenty-six as settled in her ways as any forty year old woman. She had security: a townhouse on which the mortgage was paid, a job as a secretary at the Westinghouse Appliance Repair Center, a savings account with two thousand dollars, and a cat named Luigi who was vaccinated, de-clawed, and fixed. She could sew her own clothes, cook on a budget, and keep her car in general running condition. The only thing wrong with Frances' life was that she was not married. Not that she thought it was wrong, but apparently everyone else did. Her mother was always asking her when and if she dated, suggesting a new hairstyle, or prodding her to get out more. The people from work would invite her over when an unattached male was visiting or try to fix her up with one of the service truck drivers. Every day was one endless 'no, thank you' defense of her being single, of throwing away junk mail from computer dating services, of avoiding "guys & gals" night at the health spa. Frances, a medium tall, brown-haired, average girl, did not wish to be eligible for anything other than occupying her assigned living space and infringing on no one else's. Until Maury Greenspan killed himself. It was from Frances' room, suite 507 of the Wesser Hotel, that Maury took his suicide plunge.

"No, I didn't know him," Frances answered the policeman's question, holding the front of her bathrobe together. Everything had happened so quickly she had not had a chance to get dressed, and now three men had infiltrated her room: the policeman facing her, writing down her statements, another peering through the window at the ambulance and body below, and the hotel manager, standing by the door, his eyes surveying the otherwise undisturbed room, and settling on Frances. She tried to hide the toes of her slipperless feet, the toenails of which she had painted 'midnight crimson.'

"But you told us his name and this key to your

room was found in his coat pocket." He pointed his pencil toward the chair where the key lay beside a tan overcoat. "You also said you got a temporary key from the desk after telling the clerk you locked this key in your room."

"I did think I locked it in here," she insisted. "But I couldn't find it. I don't know how he got it." The light from the ambulance was flashing red in the darkness outside the window. "Listen, I just met him in the restaurant downstairs tonight. He bought me a grilled cheese sandwich and we talked. That's all. I came up to my room and went to bed about 11:00. I have to go work tomorrow... I mean today. He didn't try to pick me up or anything. He was a nice man and he didn't seem at all depressed. But when I woke up at two he was in the room, standing by the window. He was naked. I screamed and he jumped. He just jumped."

"Did you have sexual relations with him?" The young officer's tone was one of routine indifference.

"No! I told you I didn't know him!" She could feel her cheeks grow flushed and hot.

"What are you doing in this hotel, Miss Shaw? You said you live and work in Wesser?"

"My townhouse is being repainted inside. I didn't want to be in all the mess, so I came to stay a few days in the hotel." A small "hmph?" came from where the manager stood.

"Do you always sleep in the nude, Miss Shaw?" The policeman had his eyes directed towards the area of her thigh exposed through the parted bathrobe. She pulled it together.

"I don't know what you are getting at, but nothing happened in this room besides that... that disturbed man jumping out."

"Just trying to get the facts," he said, scribbling in his notebook. The ambulance pulled away, its light no longer flashing, and the other policeman moved towards the door. "I'd like a phone number where we can reach you tomorrow." She gave him her home phone and they left. The manager remained standing in the doorway.

"Under the circumstances I'll have to ask you to leave."

"I was planning to leave anyway. I . . ." she stopped herself, knowing any attempt to regain dignity would be in vain.

When she arrived home the townhouse was cold and turning on the lights revealed stark half-painted walls and furniture swathed in plastic covers. Luigi padded guiltily down the stairs from where he had probably been asleep on her bed. He trailed her into the kitchen to beg a saucer of milk as she fixed herself a bowl of cornflakes. She was upset about the episode with the police, but it puzzled her how calmly she was taking the fact that Maury Greenspan was dead. It was not often a man sat down to talk to her besides to talk business. Salesmen, company representatives, they were all alike. Business mixed with bawdy jokes and passes, embarrassing her in front of the other secretaries in the office. But it was after working hours when she met Maury; he wasn't the friend of a friend's boyfriend or a fixed date. She was alone in a hotel restaurant and he didn't know anything about her.

"Hello, may I sit with you?" he had said. She didn't feel like having company, but she couldn't think of a plausible excuse for refusing. They were the only two people in the restaurant and he had been watching her eat for the past ten minutes.

"I'm sorry if I bothered you, staring like I was, but you remind me of someone. Have you ever been to New Orleans?" he had asked her.

"No," she said. He was rather an old man to be trying to pick up girls, she thought. His suit was dressy, but very wrinkled, as though he'd been wearing it to sleep in.

"I'm staying here at the hotel while I do some business in town," he tried again. "Are you visiting Wesser, also?"

Frances betrayed her annoyance with a frown as she laid her sandwich down and wiped her hands on her napkin. "I really don't think—" she began, but he interrupted her.

"I'm sorry," he apologized and pushed back his chair. "I know I'm being forward, but I was looking for someone to talk to. I see I'm bothering you."

Frances was embarrassed by his sincerity. "No," she heard herself saying, "it's all right, please stay." He settled back in the chair and she was faced with his watery eyes again, disturbing in their intensity. "I . . . live in Wesser. I'm staying at the hotel until my house is repainted." It was hard for her to talk. "Are you from New Orleans?"

"Originally," he said. "We've travelled quite a lot, my wife and I. All over America and Europe. South America, too. I have trouble placing faces; that's why I thought I knew you from somewhere. Do you travel?"

"No. My parents used to when I was younger, but since I've been on my own, I haven't been able to get away from my job to go anywhere."

"A shame," he muttered, looking concerned. "You meet so many different people. Yet you find that people are really the same all over. Same worries, same passions, same faces." He smiled at Frances and then lapsed into his thoughtfulness again. "My wife died in Paris two years ago. Well, can't travel much anyway, now. Doctor says it's too trying on my heart. So I've come to Wesser to live."

"Didn't you say you came on business?" she questioned.

"Did I? Oh, yes, well I'm looking for an apartment. That's what I meant." It seemed to her he wasn't sure what he was doing.

Now, sitting at the kitchen table, she wondered if while they were talking he already had thoughts of suicide. The cornflakes were soggy, but Frances spooned them into her mouth anyway, trying to pick up some hint from their conversation. He had rambled on about old friends who were dead now, about having met his wife in England over twenty-five years ago, and about a book on the geography of Ireland he had edited. She had managed to tell him some rather personal things about herself; things she would not think of telling her friends at work, but spilled out easily to him. Somehow two hours had gone by and they were still talking when the waiter came over to say that the restaurant closed at 11:00. Maury had paid for her grilled cheese and walked with her to the elevator. When she had left him there he was smiling, not depressed. Now he was dead. Would it be in the papers? she wondered. No, Wesser was a family town. They didn't print

accidents, suicides, or crimes in the suburban paper. Only the garden club news. And wedding engagements, want ads. But would anyone find out it was her room? Maybe the police thought it was murder, that she pushed him out the window. She rinsed out the bowl in the sink, trying not to think about it. After all, she wasn't in jail, was she? She let Luigi outside and went upstairs to her bedroom. She would have to call in sick tomorrow. Mr. Wood, her boss, wouldn't mind. She hardly ever took a day off. She was exhausted, but it was a long while before she fell asleep. Maury's voice haunted her mind. He was an odd little man. Was. God, she had been in her bathrobe when the police were there.

The phone rang at nine o'clock that morning. It was Mr. Wood, wondering what had happened to her. She apologized for not calling, saying she had been sick in the night and hadn't gotten any sleep. Did she think she might be able to make it there in the afternoon? Tuesday was the busiest day. Yes, she would try to be in after lunch.

The painters came before she had a chance to get dressed; she had given them a key and they surprised her sitting in the kitchen in her bathrobe, munching a morning bowl of cornflakes. She was embarrassed, but they passed it off casually and went about their job. It bothered her though. They probably thought she was sitting there on purpose in her nightgown, knowing they were coming, to tempt them into a wild sex orgy like in the true confessions magazines. If they could see her pantry full of Family Size boxes of cornflakes, they would laugh.

She dressed for work and lingered upstairs, avoiding the painters and waiting by the phone. The police hadn't said for sure they'd call, but she felt at loose ends, hoping they would.

They didn't, and she drove to work, feeling odd coming in at an unusual hour, on the day after a bizarre night. She had the feeling everyone's head turned when she entered the lunchroom to put her things in her locker. Julie, who worked at the desk beside hers, came up to her and spoke.

"Frances, I have to talk to you. Let's go to the lounge." She followed the petite girl down the hall. They sat down on the vinyl couch in the ladies' lounge, alone except for occasional traffic passing to and from the bathroom.

"Are you all right?"

"Of course I'm all right," Frances said, nervously. "I was feeling a little sick this morning, but I'm okay now. Why?"

"Frances, you don't have to lie. Everybody knows. Bill, one of the service men, was at the Wesser Hotel this morning, repairing one of their washers. He heard from one of the guests what happened last night, about that man jumping from a window. She was right next door when it happened. Told him it was somebody named 'Miss Shaw.' Bill was talking about it to some of the other service men at lunch and one of them heard you say you were going to stay there while they repainted your house. Frances, it's true, isn't it? He jumped from your room?"

Frances felt like she was going to be sick. Last night had been a nightmare, but it had been her secret nightmare. Now, to hear it from another person unsettled her. Her jaws tightened as she started to cry.

"Oh, honey, there, there," Julie comforted her. "You'll be all right. Let me get you some water." Frances shook her head and straightened up.

"I'm okay. It's just the shock. It didn't really hit me until now."

"You want to talk about it?"

"There's nothing to say. He was just a man I talked to in the hotel restaurant. If only I would have

known he was suicidal, maybe I could have talked him out of it."

"Well, you have to admit, it isn't a very healthy way to end an affair."

Frances stared at her.

"Oh, I'm sorry, honey. I didn't mean to say it that way. But you sure showed a lot of people around here. You know that Hal. He thinks anyone who turns him down for a date is a lesbian. But now, our little Frances—"

Frances stood up, not believing what she heard.

"Julie, I wasn't having an affair with him."

"Oh. Well, that's all right. Everyone lets loose once in a while. Even I—"

Frances cut her short again. "I didn't pick him up off the streets either! There was nothing between us!"

"What was he doing in your room, then?"

Frances started to explain, but stopped. She didn't have to explain to anyone. She turned and walked out into the hall, colliding with Mr. Wood.

"Frances. Feeling better?"

Everything was churning inside her head. "Mr. Wood, I think I'd better go back home. I'm not feeling very well."

"You do look pale. I wouldn't want you to work if you're sick." He studied her with concern, and she eased inside. She had never seen him in this way before. Always he had been the short, balding man who was her employer. Now, she could sense there was a reflection of emotion in his eyes. She remembered something that Maury had said, about people's faces. Julie came out of the bathroom and brushed past them, walking towards the lunchroom. They all knew, they all misunderstood. How long before Mr. Wood found out, or did he already know? Whatever he was saying was drowned out by the buzzing in her head. She turned and ran to her locker and got her coat. He called after her, but she was out the door.

The painters were having their lunch in the hallway when she came in the house and she awkwardly stepped over their sandwich wrappings and thermoses to get to the stairs. They had moved some of their mess to the bedroom; the bed was covered in plastic, the rug was rolled up in the hallway, and paint cans littered the floor. The air reeked of new paint and turpentine. She sat on the edge of the bed anyway and out of frustration, forced herself to cry.

"People are the same all over," Maury had said. Maybe he was right and suicide was the only escape from them. She was tired. She didn't want to think. She pulled the plastic cover off the bed and laid down to sleep.

An hour later she woke when she heard the doorbell ringing and a man talking with one of the painters. She went downstairs.

"Miss Shaw?" A black man in a business suit stood in the foyer. "I'm Detective Prager from the police department." He pulled a badge from his wallet and held it out in his palm. Wondering what the painters must think now, she showed him into the den. She knew she must have red eyes after crying. She smoothed her hair, afraid of what he had to say.

"This note addressed to you was found in Mr. Greenspan's hotel room last night," he began. "Of course we had to read it—"

He handed her a folded sheet of hotel stationery and she read it, skimming nervously and then reading again.

Dear Miss Shaw,

What I am about to do will cause you problems but I think maybe it is something useful I can do for you. Sudden jolts with reality always force us to see ourselves as we really are. I can see that I have lived too long and so I am doing something about that. I can also see myself in you, and that is not good in one so young.

While I was talking to you I forgot I was an old man and that all the places I'd seen and people I'd met were in the past. Where are they now? I never really knew any of them. Do you know anybody?

I think if you gave people half a chance, they would not seem so bad. Also yourself.

I am tired. I can't seem to get down what I mean to say. I must go.

*Sincerely,
Maury Greenspan*

"It's not so hard to figure out," Prager continued. "Old guys do it all the time. Find themselves retired and alone in the world, figure they'd rather be dead with their wives and friends than trying to live on social security checks and looking at the walls. We checked in New Orleans, talked with the University down there. He was a geography professor, retired last year. His wife is buried here in Wesser. He sold his house in New Orleans, came up here to visit his wife's grave, and got him a hotel room to jump out of. It happens all the time."

Frances looked up from the note, tears in her eyes.

"I guess he wanted to make sure someone knew and cared that he was gone," Prager explained to her. "So he came to your room."

"Does he have any relatives?" she managed to say.

"His wife's family lived in Wesser, but they're all dead now. His body's in the morgue. The county will take care of the burial."

"Will they make sure he is buried by his wife?" she asked.

"I don't know. I guess if the plot is already paid for—"

"I—if I were to take over the arrangements, I mean get a funeral home to take care of the body and see he's buried by his wife, how would I go about it?"

"You can give me a name and I'll make sure the body is transferred to whatever funeral home you prefer," Prager offered.

"Thank you." She brushed her face with her fingers. "Can I call you later this afternoon?"

"Certainly." He looked at her with respect and shook her hand as he left. He was not like everyone else. He had understood.

She looked again at the note. Maury had cared. She had found love in him, even if it had only been for one evening over a grilled cheese.

She told her mother about everything except the note. It was not something she could keep to herself and stay sane. Mrs. Shaw tried unsuccessfully to talk her out of making the funeral arrangements.

"You are as good as acknowledging an affair," she had said on Wednesday, standing at the front of the townhouse in one last plea as her daughter locked the front door. "I can't let him be buried by indifferent caretakers in an empty cemetery. I already got the day off and I told the minister I'd be there at eleven o'clock. I want to go." She walked towards the cars.

"I don't understand you," her mother said, following.

Frances corralled Luigi, who eased out from under the wheels of her mother's car. "Would you put him in the house for me and lock up again—I've got to rush," she asked, and held out the heavy cat.

"You know I hate cats," Mrs. Shaw said, stepping back.

Frances paused and searched her mother's face. "I forgot. I guess we don't know each other very well." Luigi escaped her weak hold and ran for the bushes. "I'll never get him now."

She helped the older woman into her car and leaned in the window. "Try to understand, Mother. I'm learning. Give me a chance," she said and kissed her.

Frances got into her car, watching her mother's car turn the corner, and drove away.

